

REMARKS

Claims 1-25, and 27-44 are currently pending in this application, claims 26 having been cancelled without prejudice by the foregoing amendments. Claims 1, 2, 5-12, 15-20, and 33-44 stand allowed. Claims 3, 4, 13 and 14 stand rejected as lacking antecedent basis; claims 21-25 and 29-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over French Patent Application No. 2,732,030; and claims 26-28 and 32 stand objected to as they depend from a rejected claim.

Applicant respectfully requests consideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim Amendments

Claims 3 and 13 were amended to correct an antecedent basis problem. This amendment is believed to place claims 3, 4, 13, and 14 in condition for allowance.

Claim 21 was amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 26, and claim 26 was subsequently cancelled without prejudice. As the examiner indicated that claim 26 would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitation of its base claim, this amendment is believed to place claims 21-25 and 27-32 in condition for allowance. Claim 32 was amended to depend from claim 27 in light of the cancellation of claim 26.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully requests early consideration of the present application, entry of all amendments herein requested, and allowance of all pending claims.

The Examiner is respectfully invited to contact Todd W. Galinski at (336) 607-7448, to discuss any matter relating to this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 1/4/05

Todd W. Galinski
Todd W. Galinski (Reg. No. 51,713)

Kilpatrick Stockton LLP
1001 West Fourth Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
(336) 607-7300